

Covent Garden prompt. books

v. 7

FIVE MILES OFF:
OR,
THE FINGER POST;
A COMEDY,
IN THREE ACTS;
AS ACTED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, HAY-MARKET.

WRITTEN BY T. DIBDIN,

AUTHOR OF

THE JEW and DOCTOR, BIRTH-DAY, WILL for the DEED, THIRTY
THOUSAND, CABINET, ENGLISH FLEET, FAMILY QUARRELS,
WHITE PLUME, VALENTINE and ORSON, IL BONDUCANI,
SCHOOL for PREJUDICE, FIVE THOUSAND a YEAR,
GUILTY or not GUILTY, ST. DAVID'S DAY, NAVAL
PILLAR, MOUTH of the NILE, HORSE and the
WIDOW, &c. &c.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

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1809.

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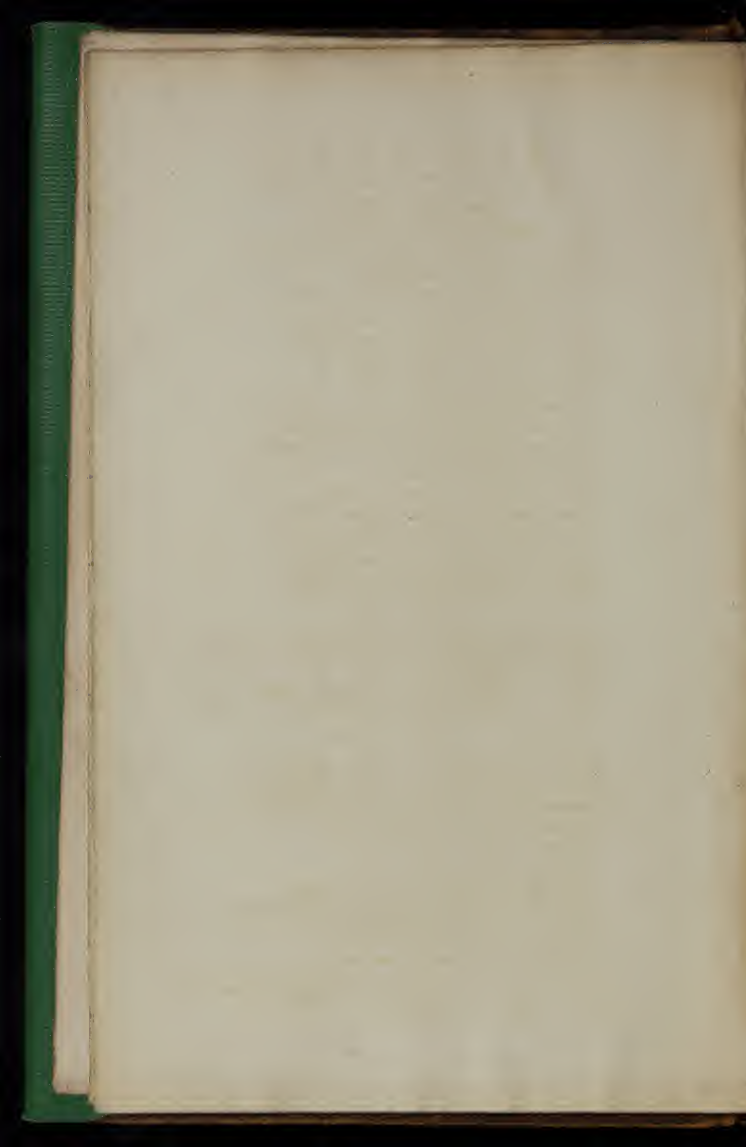
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PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

Spoken by Mr. FAWCETT.

SOME Hypercritic cries, in ev'ry age,
"How rich the past, how poor the present Stage!"
So undertakers say, on corpses fed,
"Ah! there's no man of value till he's dead!"
Some self-made ARISTARCHUS ever sits,
Like a Judge JEFFERIES, over modern wits,
Bullies upon the bench—his upright plan,
First to *abuse*, then *execute* the man.

Still thrives our Stage, still seems there vigour in't;
For you smile here, while cynics scowl in print,
Plain proof, you think, whate'er our Stage may be,
Such critics infinitely worse than we!

Yet far from us, one murmur to repeat,
When *Liberal Censure* fills the judgment seat,
We thank the hand that points, with gentle art,
The wholesome lancet to some morbid part,
The butcher, with his hatchet, 'tis we hate,
Who kills, where able surgeons *amputate*.

If we give *trash*, as some few pertlings say,
Why flocks an audience nightly to the Play?
If we be found *immoral* in our scene,

What does the Law's restraint on Drama's mean?
To state the first, they laugh at you alone—
To state the last, is *libelling the Throne*.*

Truth is, when impulse can be fairly roused,
Smile, tear, or grin, by you our arts espoused.
However pedants preach, you'll think those fools,
Who laugh or cry by Aristotle's rules.
And, while a laugh or cry is to be had,
Authors and actors can't be *very* bad.

Oh! may this doctrine be allow'd to night,
And be a laugh—broad laugh—your chief delight!
Look not with eyes of critical disdain,
But favour *one* who strives to *entertain*!

* An Act of Parliament has vested the power of licensing and suppressing the representation of Dramas in his Majesty's Lord Chamberlain.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

'Squire Flail, - - - - -	Mr. CHAPMAN.
Sordid, - - - - -	Mr. GROVE. <i>Simmons</i>
Kalendar, - - - - -	Mr. FAWCETT.
Edward, - - - - -	Mr. BAE. <i>Abbott</i>
Lucklefs, - - - - -	Mr. DE CAMP. <i>Fairly</i>
Andrew, - - - - -	Mr. NOBLE. <i>Carroll</i>
Spriggins, - - - - -	Mr. MATHEWS. <i>Long</i>
O'Gimlet, - - - - -	Mr. DENMAN. <i>Hunterton</i>
Flourish (<i>with a Song</i>) - -	Mr. LISTON.
Black Bob, - - - - -	Mr. HATTON. <i>Gibbs</i>
Dapper, - - - - -	Mr. MENAGE.
Robert, - - - - -	Mr. PARLOE.
Thomas, - - - - -	Mr. JOHNSTON.
Dick, - - - - -	Mr. GOODWIN, Junr. <i>Sargant</i>
Mrs. Prue, - - - - -	Mrs. POWELL. <i>Davenport</i>
Mary Flail, - - - - -	Mrs. MATHEWS.
Jenny, - - - - -	Mrs. GIBBS.
Laura Luckles (<i>with a Song</i>)	Miss TYRER.

The circumstance introduced in the following piece, of the building of a house in one night, is formed on a fact:--Hampstead Heath is the spot, where a beautiful cottage, so constructed, is still in being. The character of Spriggins, with his repetition of "*I have forty pounds a-year,*" &c. is also copied from an existing original.

San Antonio Louis
Countryman W. Chapman
Bricklayer Norris
Robert Heath
Thomas Sargent
Boy ———

Bill ready OP

Five Miles off; or, the Finger Post. 1

ACT I.

SCENE—A Park Lodge—Sun-rise.

Enter EDWARD.

E. H. EDWARD.

WITH what exhilarating freshness does the breath of morn enliven the surrounding landscape, and how eagerly do the sweets of nature seem to start from their luxuriant beds, to hail the rising sun; 'tis thus the cheering blaze of prosperity gladdens all, except the wretched few, who, like myself, are doomed to wither in the shade of poverty! (*knocks at the lodge door.*) Who have I to blame? the man who unjustly suffers, has innate virtue to sustain his fortitude, while I —

2^d E. R. Enter ANDREW from the Lodge.

Edw. Well, my old foster-father!

And. My poor young master—and on foot too?

Edw. I have come hither in hopes—

And. Which won't help you on your way back—your ill-used father—

Edw. Mention him not—I scarcely have recovered the shock his death has given me.

And. It was a bad day for his tenants, a woeful hour for his servants.

Edw. Yet they were happy—they did not offend him; but I had not the legacy of a parting blessing, nor the consolation of thinking I deserved one.

And. As to what he left to others—well, well, Mr. Sordid, his rich steward may have a marble monument when *he* dies, and fine verses on it too, but I saw upon your father's tomb-stone, somewhat that beats all the poetry I ever read.

*Edward
Andrew
Spring
Lutter*

Bill. D.

Edw. His epitaph, already! am *I* the last to pay a tribute to his memory? From what hand *came* it?

And. From the *heart*, young master. His name was honoured with a poor man's tear! The old curate said, that words may be cut deep in marble, and if such marks as I saw, don't last *here* so long, it is because they're gone to be read in a better place.

Edw. When his son dies, if truth inscribe his epitaph, 'twill be the record of his follies. Has Sordid seiz'd on all?

And. All—there were bonds and mortgages, which no one dreamt of till your father died.

Edw. My father has been as much misled as *I* have been, tho' *his* errors have been on the score of friendship—*mine* of folly.

And. I hope you'll call old Sordid to account?

Edw. I'll to him instantly;—a short visit will suffice for what I'd settle with *him*—then for *one* interview elsewhere—~~and, after that, a musquet, Andrew.~~

And. Sir!

Edw. Nay, do not fear—I have been my *own* enemy too long, and dare not turn my rage against myself, while England has a foe to vent it on.

[Exit EDWARD. *R*]

And. Poor lad! I know whose house he means to go to next, and *there* he'll find the doors shut against him. Ah, if he knew who a certain person was going to be married too, he'd——Bless my heart—Why, neighbour——

L—Enter SPRIGGINS, with a Letter.

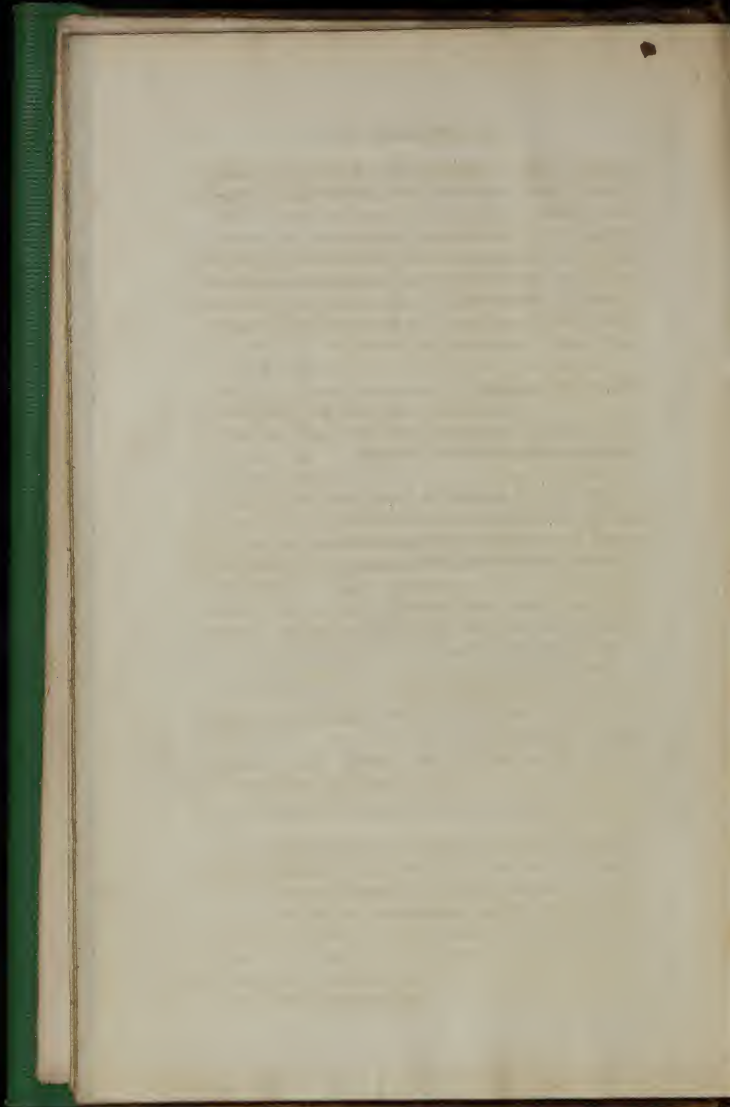
Sprig. Not much of a neighbour, now—it's a long walk from our house to yours. I live with Master Kalendar, the great star-gazing gentleman, as gives his advice to all his neighbours, and makes all the clipfes of the moon—and, I have brought a letter—

And. From him?

Sprig. No, not from him.

And. Well, but for me?

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Sprig. No, for young Mr. Edward Frankland, in case he should call on you;—it be a secret who it comes from.

And. And who *does it* come from?

Sprig. Why that you been't to mention—nor you mustn't tell him about some money in the inside o't, for fear he should find it out—I was to give it into his own hands, and as I is very particular, do you take it, and let him have it directly.

And. A pretty messenger—follow him—he's not two hundred yards off—he went that way—

Sprig. No, I can't stay,—got to go a great way home through the forest—I know you'll give it him—because I should be ashamed—

And. Ashamed!

Sprig. Why, you see a friend as don't chuse to be known, has sent him *money*, and two or three of us lads have made a sort of a *description* for him, and so have slipt some small matters o' notes under the cover, because if he knew we did it, he might be a little proud like, and wouldn't take it—he's been a bit wild, but we must help him for sake of his poor father.

And. (*takes the letter*) Well, my good lad, when you come to be poor, you'll—

Sprig. Me poor! I've forty pounds a year o' my own, besides wages.

And. Aye, but if you *shou'd* by any wonderful change of fortune, get rid of all your property, this money you have here given, will come back to you *three times over*.

Sprig. Indeed! Why then it's almost a pity to send it—for, if we only give away a trifle in hopes of getting more than lawful interest, you may call it good-nature, but I shou'd call it swindling.

And. Well, I'll give it him when he comes from old Sordid—you know old Sordid—

Sprig. I remember him when I was a boy, but I've never seen him since I left living hereabouts—he

2.
Edward
Lapport

turn'd my father out of a farm once—but—fare ye well—you'll give the letter.

And. If you doubt me, take it yourself.

Sprig. No—it hurts gentlefolks' feelings to give 'em money with your own hands; and, I suppose, that's what makes some on 'em so afraid to affront poor folks in the same way. For my part, I never fret about trifles, and if so be as a man who cou'd afford it, were even to offer me a hundred pounds, I'd put up with it, sooner than pick a quarrel with any body.

[*Exit SPRIGGINS.*]

And. Well said, John Spriggins—the way thou hast contrived thy present to the poor lad, adds to its value. Egad, I don't see why I shoud'nt take the same advantage of young master—I've saved a trifle in his father's service. Go for a foldier! Why shoud' he be ashamed to take the bounty of his friends—I'm sure, if there was enough here to buy him a pair of colours, no ensign in the service cou'd fight under a standard more honourably purchased.

[*Exit ANDREW into the lodge.*]

SCENE—A Room in the House of MR. SORDID.

Enter EDWARD and DAPPER.

Dap. Lud, Sir!

Edw. Nay, sir, but in a case so material to my interests, I must and will be attended to.

Dap. But, dear me, sir, where's the use of my attending to your declaration, when I can't put in an answer.

Edw. Then call Mr. Sordid—call your master—I'm determined to be heard.

Dap. You must have strong lungs to make him hear you—he went to London yesterday, and will be returnable in the evening, unless Mr. Flail, of Harveft Hall, lodges a detainer and keeps him all night, for he is to call there in his way home.

Edw. I'll meet him there.

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Thomas - D. Letter
Sordick
Sprizung

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Dap. Better not, sir—he's as busy as the first day of term—he's going to see his son married to Miss Mary——

Edw. To whom, sir?

Dap. Miss Mary Flail, sir—as fine a young woman as ever appeared before the king himself, at Westminster.

Edw. His son! married to Mary Flail—to my Mary—I never heard he had a son.

Dap. Nor and body else, till within these few days, nor do I believe, (speaking to the best of my knowledge) that the young gentleman is yet aware that he has a father.

Edw. Why has such a circumstance been secret?

Dap. Haven't received the necessary instructions to enable me to inform you, sir; all I know is, that master's gone to fetch the young gentleman, and I dare say their meeting will be as pleasant as the long vacation.

Edw. Then, it is not only to beggar me, but to enrich a rival, the old pirate has plundered our estate.

Dap. Not prepared at present to enter on his defence.

Edw. But, Mr. Flail can never be so unjust.

Enter THOMAS (with a letter.)

Tho. Mr. Dapper, here is a letter directed for—lord bless him, there he is himself—it's for your honour—(*gives it respectfully to EDWARD.*)

Dap. (*to EDWARD*) Well, sir; you needn't fear to leave any message with me—I'm acquainted with most of Mr. Sordid's concerns

Edw. Are you acquainted with his conscience?

Dap. Out of my department, I'm his clerk, and manage his law concerns; as to conscience, that's quite another thing, and forms no part of our business—shew the gentleman down. (*Exit DAPPER.*)

Edw. Will you give me leave to open this first?

Tho. Surely, sir, I wish it may bring good news—
it comes from Mr. Flail's, sir. *Exit P.*

Edw. From Mary's father—'tis his writing.—

"Young Man,

*"Every body knows his own business
best, and it's my duty to provide well for my daughter,
If you hadn't lost your fortune through your own fault,
I might have made some allowance, but now, no offence,
I hope, if the girl marries somebody else—being all, at
present, from your's,*

"FIREBRAND FLAIL."

*"P. S. I bear no malice, and when Mary's married,
shall be glad to see you at Harvest Hall. You're
a choice fellow at hunting—and if any body says he
sings a better song, I'm no judge—that's all."*

The die is cast then—and the mansion of my father is preparing to receive my rival, in possession of my home, my fortune, and my promis'd bride.

Tho. Never mind, sir, they may take possession of the house, and stich themselves up at church, but there isn't a cottager's wife will go to visit them.

Edw. Deprived of my fortune, I meant to have voluntarily resigned all claim to her—but even the merit of such a sacrifice is here denied me. Yet I will see her—she has no share in the unfeeling conduct of her father, and were mine yet living, even his anger would not doom me thus to suffer. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE—A Landscape—the Stage forming a point where four Roads are supposed to meet.

Enter SORDID and SPRIGGINS.

Sor. Thank'ye friend, thank'ye—and so I was going the wrong road;

Sprig. You're right.

Sor. And pray, where does that path go to?

Sprig. No where, sir—it do always stay where it is—but if you go this way—

Sor. I shall come to Farmer Flail's?

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A

Flourish

Olive leaf with finger post
a written bill

Sprig. No, sir, not to Farmer Flail's;

Sor. No! why what a plague d'ye mean—I came *one* way—you bring me back from the *second*—you say the *third's* wrong, and the fourth won't do.

Sprig. No more it won't, sir.

Sor. If you'll allow me neither east, west, north, nor south, for horizontal progression, I must either sink or fly, and unless I get a balloon or a burying-ground, may stay here till doomsday.

Sprig. If you like it, Sir; but I'll bedang'd if any of those roads will take you to Farmer Flail's.

Sor. Is he dead, then?

Sprig. No, sir, but he have left off farming, and turn'd 'squire—he have got 'a pack o' hounds and visitors—have filled his cellar full of French wine—bottled off his best ale—and brought his daughter home from boarding-school.

Sor. Indeed!

Sprig. Yes, she *was* a free-hearted girl, and ha' danced wi' I, at our hop-harvest—but now she moves French *minutes* as stately as a waggon o' wheat-straw, and cou'd no more milk one o' my cows, than I cou'd play upon one of her forty pianos.

Sor. But, if her father's rich, his daughter *ought* to be instructed in all manner of modern accomplishments.

Sprig. So she shou'd, sir—but not in ways of wickedness and roguery. When I open'd a long book of her's, they pretend to call musick, I saw with my own eyes, it was to teach her the true art of *fingering*.

Sor. Blockhead! bumpkins shoul'dn't pretend to teach their betters. What's your name, friend?

Sprig. My name's John Spriggins, sir—I have forty pounds a-year, besides wages—and without offence, sir, who may you be?

Sor. Simon Sordid, Esquire.—You must have heard of me, or you're an ignoramus.

Sprig. Oh! this is Mr. Sordid (*aside*.)—Umph! yes, sir, I be ignoramus, sure enough; but I do

4
Flourish
Oh my! the
Finger-post

know my way out o' this pleace, without either a balloon or a burying-ground; and as you be so woundy clever, I dare say you can find yourn.

Sor. Not without assistance—you promis'd to shew me.

Sprig. Yes, sir; but bumpkins shoudn't pretend to teach their betters—so I wish you a pleasant walk—here be only four roads to chuse, and if you take but one at a time, it's nineteen to nothing, but you'll find the right way without axing any body—*(going)*

Sor. What an inhuman clod-hopper!

Sprig. *(returns)* I forgot to say, sir, that there's Gaffer Goreun's bull has a knack o' running at folks, and Black Bob, brother to him as hangs in chains yonder, do swear vengeance on all that pass this here way.

Sor. Any thing else?

Sprig. Only a fine dark cloud over head, and I ha talk'd mysel too *dry*, to stand here and get wet for any body. *[Exit.]*

Sor. A mad bull! a robbery! and a thunder-storm! Curse all crofs roads and stage coachmen!—to leave me at the mercy of Black Bob and his brother—for here they certainly come, and one of 'em bringing the gbbet along with him. *[Exit.]*

Enter FLOURISH and O'GIMLET, carrying a Finger-post.

O'Gim. There's a delightful direction-post, made by me, Mr. O'Gimlet,

Flou. And beautified by me, Solomon Flourish.

O'Gim. Which is to stand here, and point to four roads at once, like the picture of Three-finger'd Jack. Wait until I remove the stone turf that covers the hole I dug for it—there, *down* with it *(they fix it.)*

Flou. Verily friend, it is already too low—the heads of the passengers will come bump against it,

and the fingers thereof will poke out the eyes of all who look thereon.

O'Gim. And hav'nt I made the top loose, honey, that, if you tip it the least touch, it gets out of the way, before you can say chips.

Flou. (*puts it round.*) Thou hast made it like unto a turnstile!

O'Gim. To be sure.—Would you have a poor tired foot passenger on horse-back, walk about a post to read his way, when he may twirl it round as easy as nothing, to which of the four roads he pleases.

Flou. And from which every puff of wind will turn it, as it were a weathercock.

O'Gim. If your tongue wags about weathercocks, I'll put a spoke in the wheel of it.—You're not at home, now, Mr. Flourish, talking about the dearness of paint and provisions; you may look big among little children, and tread upon every beadle in the parish; but you don't humbug Mr. O'Gimlet.

Flou. Thou art a stupid mortal.

O'Gim. No more a mortal than yourself.—I was born in the family bed-room, my father made me his fore-man when I was a boy; gave me a hammer down upon the nail, and taught me the use of a saw, before I had cut my teeth.

Flou. Have I not also been a pains-taking man?

O'Gim. Yes, and a panes-breaking man too.—You're the village glazier, and crack bushels of windows for the benefit of trade.

Flou. Have I not painted ev'ry sign in the village? Where hast thou seen a better dun-cow than I have made?

O'Gim. Guy of Warwick never kilt a dun-cow more completely;—I've seen you make a bull too; for when you was ax'd to paint the arms of man, you stuck up the three legs.

Flou. Verily, friend, the parish will not put up with this treatment of one of it's respectable inhabitants.

O'Gim. A parish that puts up your signs, will put up any thing—so pay me on the spot for this job, or I'll let a few of your glass tricks be seen through, for the good of the corporation.—There, (*shews a long bill.*) there's a few *items* to begin with.

Flou. It should begin with *imprimis*.

O'Gim. Oh, you'll put *priming* enough in your own bill, Mr. Painter.

Flou. (*reads.*) “ *Item*, A large post—*item*, timber for ditto—*item*, screws—*item*, three days and a quarter's work—and three hundred long nails.” —Three hundred!

O'Gim. To be sure—I cou'd'nt make the *fingers* without *nails*, you know honey.

Flou. “ *Glue!* ”—that article is charged more than the rest, friend.

O'Gim. All owing to the high price of putty—I'm following your own example.—Jobs come so seldom that, if it wasn't for a bit of glue, things would never be able to stick together at all at all.

Flou. Well—make this thing fast, (*turning it round*) or I'll not pay thee one farthing.

O'Gim. You may make it fast yourself.

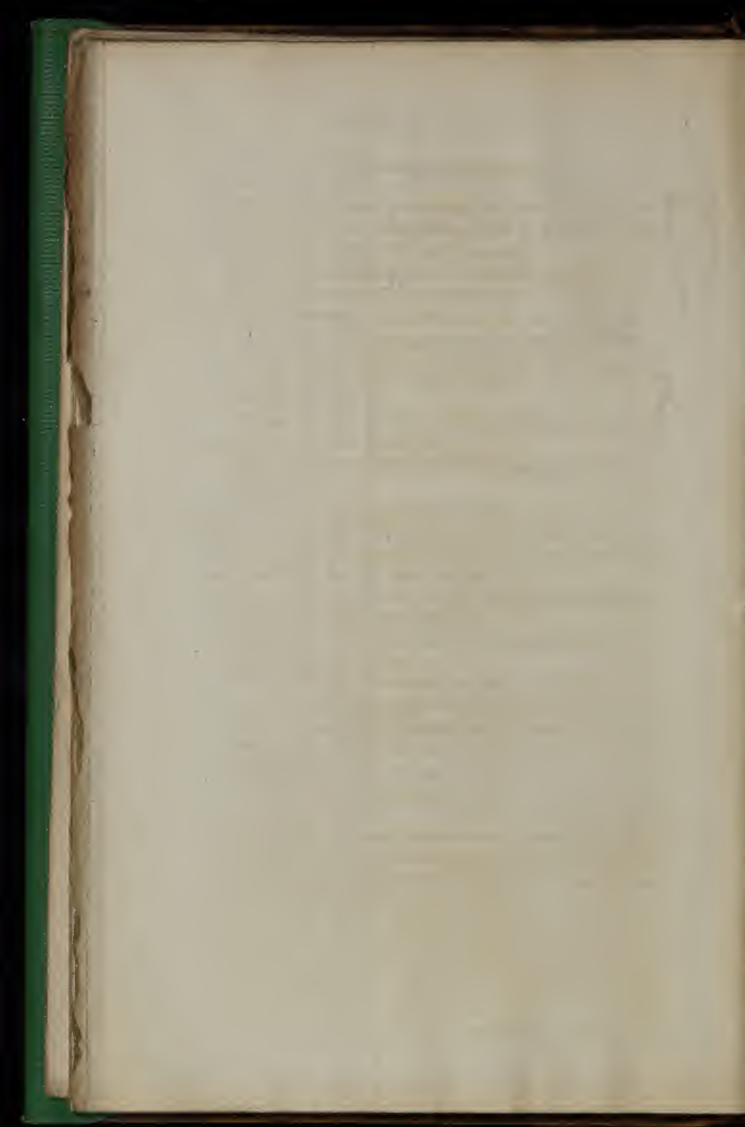
Flou. I have not the craft.

O'Gim. Oh, you've craft enough—so take it to your own house; and, if you don't make it *fast* there, it will be the best used person in the family. [*Exit.*]

Flou. It appertaineth not unto my business to set it right—he hath left it pointing to the paths of error; and I will bear witness against him, when the travellers he may lead astray, shall seek redress from the men of wigs and long suits, who are termed lawyers, who perplex us like the labyrinths of the little person called Cupid, into whose clutches I was once betrayed.

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written



SONG.

Yea, I fell in the pit of love,

The spirit then began to move.

Quoth I, "Fair maiden, ne'er deride,

For verily, when thou'rt my bride,

Lo, I will cleave unto thy side,

"Behold," said Ruth, "there is a grove,

Where birds, call'd turtles, oo and love,"

Lo! then I thought her trulymine;

But when of Love she gave his sign,

She prov'd a cruel Phi-lis-tine,

For she another suitor had,

Prophanely call'd a flashy lad,

And when I reach'd the grove assign'd,

He came before I Ruth could find,

And kick'd me ruth-less-ly behind,

With a toe tum ti.

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5

Sordid

Black Bd

Maz

Luz

Re-enter SORDID.

Sor. I've done it—I'm a wise man;—I have hid my money behind yon clump—there are certain bonds, mortgages, and securities, too:—how came I by them?—no matter—I've as much right to 'em as a highwayman, and won't be robbed. A pretty journey I've had for nothing—can't find my son—so I have advertised him.—Had the rogue known he had a rich father, he'd not have run away.—What's here? Why they have put up a guide. (*reads.*) *To Harvest Hall, 5 Miles.*—Oh, I can manage that pretty well.—

This post will point out the spot when I return for my treasure in the morning. I've kept a trifle about me, in gold, silver, and paper, to prevent ill usage; and, if I am robb'd, it shall only be of an odd-looking one pound note, a suspicious seven shilling-piece, and a Brummagen sixpence. *[Exit.]*

Enter Black Bob (in a great Coat.)

Black Bob. Tha man talk'd of money—I'll follow him.—What's thi?—a road post?—I took it for something else.—What a hard thing it is, a man can't begin his daily occupation, without being put in mind of what will be the end of it. *[Exit after SORDID.]*

Enter MARY FLAIL and JENNY.

Jen. Now doey miss Mary, bless'd, doey come on a bit vaster; we shall never get safe home, and I be all over frightfulness and consternation, for fear o' these vootpads and highway robberies, that do walk about all night, and there be put in the newspapers every morning.

Mary. There's no cause for fear, Jenny; and I must rest a moment *(sits on a Bank.)*

Jen. Now doas'tye go to stop, whatever ye do. If we be overtaken here by strange men, there'll be despart work, I promise ee.

Mary. I hav'n't much to lose, and shou'd make no resistance.

Jen. No more hav'n't I, miss, except this trifling token—and, if they offer'd to touch that, I be but a weak girl, but they should have all the assistance I cou'd gi, I warrant 'em.

Mary. Is it a love token, Jenny?

Jen. I do hope it be, miss—and I'm sure you don't think there's any harm in love-tokens, or you wou'd never have ventured out so far without your father's knowing it, at this time o' night.

Mary. Perhaps you think me to blame, Jenny?

Jen. Not at all for that, miss; to be sure, when I were at home, I cou'd'nt stir a voot without vather's leave; and as he never wou'd give it me, I staid at home like a dutiful child.

Mary. Cou'd you never get an opportunity?

Jen. No, miss, a poor cottage, like ours, had but one door to't—now, your father's, 'squire Flail's fine hall, ha' got so many, there's hardly finding the way in or out for 'em.

Mary. I was much happier before my father was so rich; and I liked the company of our honest neighbours, better than all the *gentlemen* who now pay court to us.

Jen. So did I, miss. The young men of our village did use to do the best to entertain the young women at a fair or a feast: but *gentlemen* do send their sweethearts away from table along wi' the cloth, that they may keep all the good things to a'ter dinner to themselves, and yet your sweetheart *was* a gentleman too.

Mary. And is so still, by *birth*.—Imprudent Edward! how early in life to have effected his ruin!

Jen. He had better have ruin'd any body else!

Mary. If my father had not sanctioned our meetings when *we* were poor, and Edward, the supposed heir to his father's wealth, I shou'dn't have ventur'd this act of disobedience.—I'm sorry we didn't see him!

Jen. Never mind, miss; my sweetheart, John Spriggins, has given the letter, long afore this.

Mary. As it contained money, to spare his feelings, I didn't say from whom it came.

Jen. I was afraid o'that, miss; and, thinking that, in all matters of true love and courtship, there ought never to be no deceit; and that nothing ought to be done that nobody shou'dn't be ashamed on.—Why, I—I—thought——

Mary. (*with apprehension.*) You thought!—Well!
—and——

Jen. I put in a bit of a note—which, as he knows I can't write, he'll never inspect whence it came.

Mary. Worse and worse!—imprudent girl! who wrote it?

Jen. Nobody as knows its meaning—Cousin Remnant, the tailor, be a poet, and famous for what he do call his measures, and distiches, and hemstiches—so I ax'd'n to write down only three lines, as I had made out o'my own head.

Mary. Three lines!

Jen. Yes—he said three lines are call'd a *driblet*: so he wrote'n, and I slipp'd'n into the paper that had the blank notes in un.

Mary. Do you remember them?

Jen. Yes, mis—

“When secret love does thus prevail,

“Remember, thereby hangs a tale—

“Your humble servant, Mary Flail.”

Mary. Mary Flail!—why, you're a ridiculous!—I—my very name at the bottom, too!

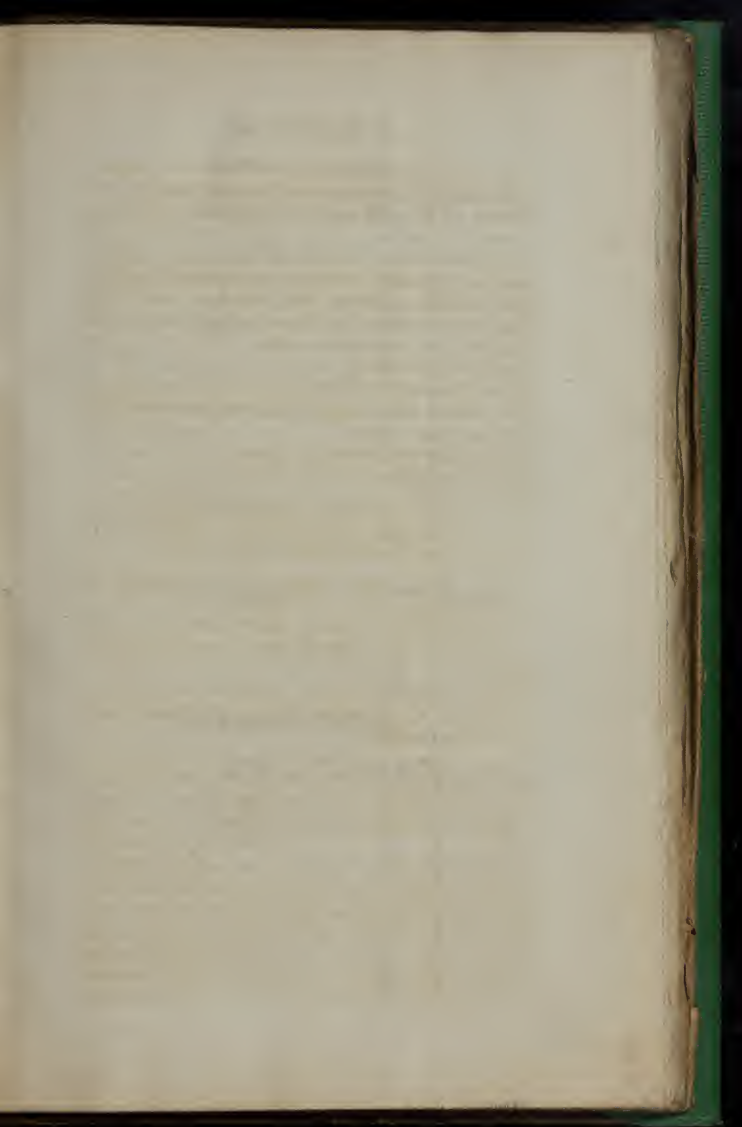
Jen. No, mis; I told un there must be no name at the bottom; so he put two lines a'ter that, (a noise heard.)

Mary. Hark! some one is making his way through the thicket. Come, Jenny, how can you loiter here; we shall be insulted.

Jen. I told'ee how 'twou'd be, mis; but there's no cause for fear, you know; so, pray, do stop, and hear the rest of my cousin's poetry.

Mary. Nonsense!—we are follow'd—Come, girl, come. [runs off.]

Jen. There, that comes o'fine talking.—When danger be at a distance, folks laugh at'n; for my part, I ha' got more courage than to run away at my own shadow. I dare say it is only a—*(going to look, immediately returns.)* Oh, mis! stop for I! we shall be robb'd—we shall be kill'd—we shall be—Oh, dear, dear, dear, mis Mary! [Exit bawling.]



1

Linklip Newspaper

Edward's Letter.

{ Bank Notes in it

Re-enter BLACK BOB.

Black Bob. I thought I heard the squall of a woman.—I fear some one is poaching on my manor: it must be some *new* hand; for gemmen footpads of the old school have too much honour to break into one another's valks.—Let's see, I made but a poor prize of that old traveller; and this unlucky great-coat may happen to betray me. I'll not venture to the village in it. The old man look'd plaguy hard at it. If he had been a *young* one, I'd have knock'd him down.—I'll leave the coat here (*throws it over the finger-post*). I have taken one pound, seven shillings, and six-pence—for which I must leave my coat behind me. It's rather hard; and, if times don't alter for the better, I shall begin to think a man may as well live honestly, if it's only for the sake of his own interest.

End of the First Act.

ACT II.

SCENE—Continued.

Enter LUCKLESS (shabbily genteel.)

LUCKLESS.

I THOUGHT I saw some one to ask the way of—
 (*takes out a new paper*)—let me see—(*reads*)—"If
 " Laurence Luckless, formerly of ——"—aye,
 my native place, sure enough—" will apply to Fire-
 " brand Flail, Esq. of Harvest Hall, he will hear
 " of something to his advantage." It's high time I
 shou'd—I've had my share of disadvantages—but,
 hang despair!--it's as shabby as my own appearance--
 I have just made my dinner and my toilet, by the
 road-side—brush'd up my best, yes, my very best
 coat—and want nothing but a shower of rain to

1
 Luckless
 Edward

Rain
 ready

blacken my hat—and then to the Hall like a gentleman—(*going—sees the post with the coat on it*)—Eh ! what the devil 's that ?—a thief ?—or a scarecrow ?

Enter EDWARD.

Edw. Neither, my boy—but an old friend who is equally glad and surpris'd to meet you.

Luck. If I wasn't afraid of making one of my usual blunders, I'd swear, that of all other men in the world, you were my once merry companion, Edward.

Edw. You may swear it with a safe conscience—I knew you at a distance, by your walk, which, like your ideas, is never in a strait line ; I cou'd not be mistaken, though I had so little light to see you by.

Luck. (*looking at his dress*) Why, you have seen me in a better light than this, I confess, Ned—however, you are very little alter'd—you seem to be as ready to acknowledge a distress'd friend as ever you were.

Edw. Heaven forbid I should be otherwise—but I shall be truly sorry if you are distress'd ; I hope you don't want much assistance ?

Luck. Indeed ! Why ?

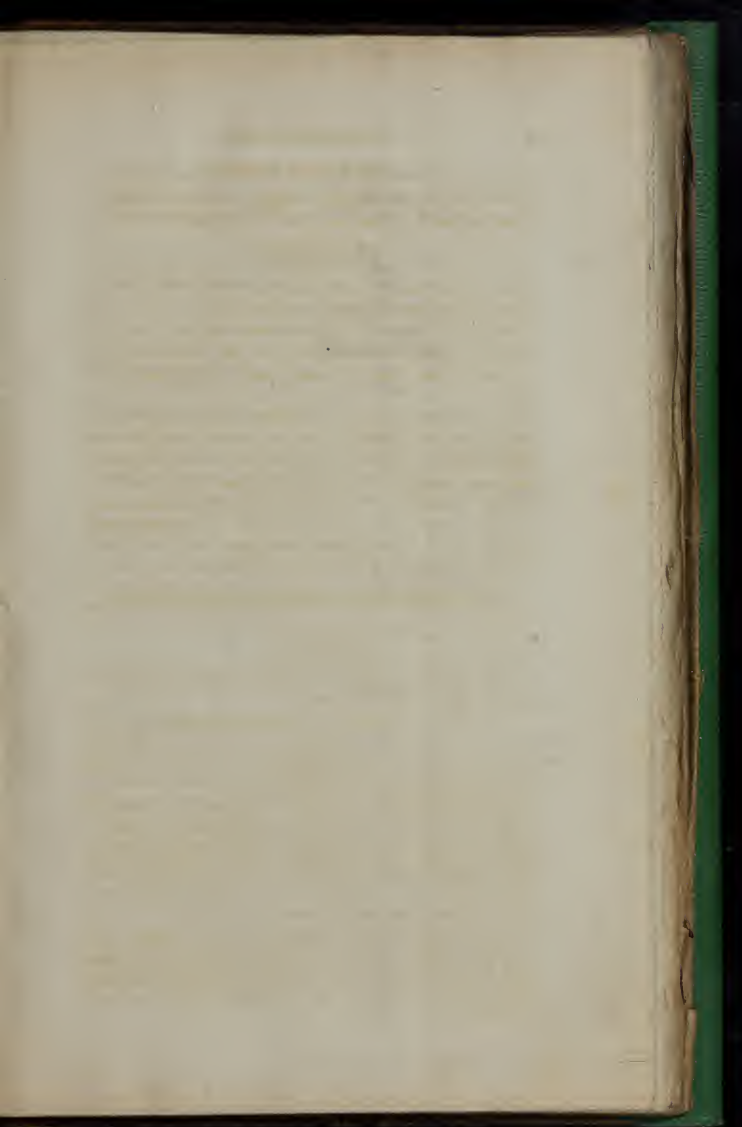
Edw. Because, psha ! Because it would not be in my power to afford it you.

Luck. No ! The heir of a fine estate—the life and soul of all your acquaintance—favourite of the ladies—envy of the lads—darling of the tenants—and best cricket player in Christendom !

Edw. As the poet says—" I cannot but remember such things were, and were most dear to me ;" but, now I am ruin'd—ruin'd by the artifices of my late father's steward, and who is now his sole executor.

Luck. Well, but how ?

Edw. Guilty of irregularities, which he in private abetted, I became so much his dependant for support and secrecy, that he was, at length, enabled to alienate me from my father's affection.



2

Mr. Paul
Hail.
Jenny to Seaman

Luck. But—in your father's dying moments—

Edw. I was artfully kept from him—was disinherited—but—d—n the money—had I but seen my father—

Luck. Bear up, my boy; and wish with me, that some quick-claw'd devil may fly away with Old Sor-did; wherever he is, may the spot prove the place of his punishment, and may his ill-gotten goods be transferred to the lawful owner, as unexpectedly as he obtained them. *2. N. P. P. d. Phil. Jerry*

Edw. Rather let me blame my own want of confidence in a parent. If you wou'd n't laugh at my morality, I would say, happy is the child, who by acknowledging a *first* failing, avoids the necessity of a thousand more, to keep that one a secret.

Luck. For my part, I never knew a parent to confess my failings to—if I *had*, there 'd have been plenty to have acknowledged; but, I keep up my spirits, and though I was unlucky before I was born, I don't remember that I cried a bit the more for it.—Have you no money?

Edw. None that I can call my own.

Luck. Can't you borrow?

Edw. No, for I know not when I can repay.

Luck. Which is the very reason why some people do borrow.

Edw. It's not the loss of wealth that I regret, but the artful viper, in the person of his son, wou'd deprive me of my love.

Luck. Has he a son?

Edw. One never own'd till now. He is to marry the girl who,—but I must hasten to return the contents of this letter, which her disinterested affection would have deceived me into accepting.

Luck. What, you *have* money then?

Edw. Yes, and it has been most curiously conveyed to me—but I have also pride—an honest pride, which, while I have youth and strength, forbids me to appropriate to my own use, the hard-earn'd sa-

vings of those who may want them in their old age, or to profit by the artless attachment of an inexperienced female; but, come, accompany me to Harvest Hall.

3

Re Sm d

+++

Luck. The very place I'm going to. I'll tell you a few of my adventures on the road, and, if what I am promised there to *my* advantage, can be thrown into your scale, you shall share it, or take it all, and welcome. (*rain heard.*) +++

Edw. You're a generous lad;—let's see what way are we in? (*looking round.*)

Luck. In a way to be wet through if we don't make haste.

Edw. Come along then (*going.*)

Luck. Not *that* path—look here, here's a guide for the road, and a coat for the weather.

Edw. No matter for the guide—I know the road lies *here.*

Luck. Does it? why then the post *lies here*—for look—as for this coat—

Edw. Come—it has been hung to dry by some one.

Luck. Who will thank me for taking it out of the wet—I've been curs'd unlucky all my life, and never found a prize before. (*takes it down—screams are heard.*)

+++

Edw. The voices of women in danger!—follow me, friend.

[*Exit.*]

Luck. (*as he puts on the coat*) That I will—Why, Edward—Which road has he taken?—no matter—for when a female wants assistance, the devil take him who can't find the way without a finger-post.

[*Exit after EDWARD.*]

[W]

SCENE—A Hall at 'Squire FLAIL's.

Enter Mrs. PRUDENCE and FLAIL

Mrs. Pru. It's to no purpose being angry, I tell you she has gone out, Mr. Flail.

Flail. Gone out, cousin Prue? My daughter gone out, without my leave, or your company?

Mrs. Pru. Aye, cousin—and heaven knows where she is gone—nay, if I did n't scorn to carry tales, I could tell you who's gone with her.

Flail. Not that spendthrift, Edward, I hope? If the huffey has dared——

Mrs. Pru. No, no; trust to my care for that; *Jane* has gone with her—the wench you have given her as own maid—own *maid* indeed, there was no such thing in the family, when I had the care of it.

Flail. It gets plaguy late—I'll go look for her—I expect Old Sordid and his son every moment—I think they might have come a little earlier.

Kal. (*Speaks without.*) Wind N. E. by North.

Mrs. Pru. Here's neighbour Kalendar.

Flail. With some of his impertinent advice, I suppose; I remember the fellow when he hadn't a shilling.

Mrs. Pru. Hush! or he may remember the same of you.

Flail. When he liv'd by making almanacks, and when you turn'd up your nose at him.

Mrs. Pru. Aye, he was *poor* then—but now——

Enter KALENDAR.

Kal. Here's alteration in the weather! ah! *Mrs. Prue?* How do, *Prue?*

Mrs. Pru. *Prue!* Sir, I am——

Kal. Rather frosty this evening—Old Firebrand, your fist; the barometer of fortune has risen with us both, but shou'dn't alter either of us.

Flail. No; you'll be a walking weather-glass as long as you live.

Kal. Better that than be a weather-cock, eh! *Mrs. Prue!* It's time the mercury in our veins shou'd stick at temperate.

Mrs. Pru. It may with *elderly* people, Mr. Kalendar; but I shall go and see if that thoughtless girl is return'd. O! Mr. K. for all your cold looks, there was a time when you little thought of change. [*Exit.*]

Kal. Change ! that was when I hadn't a guinea ; but, come, friend Flail, I want to counsel you—I fear you've had bad advisers.

Flail. Never took any advice but my own.

Kal. That's just what I mean.

Flail. Sir, I've money in my pocket—good tenants on my land—a fine girl of a daughter—and a delightful pack of hounds—then what do I want with advice.

Kal. To learn how to spend your money—manage your tenants—marry your daughter—and chuse friends to go a hunting with.

Flail. Who's to teach me ?

Kal. Vox Stellarum—study the stars—do you take in my new almanack ?

Flail. Not I ; I was a farmer twenty years, and never knew one right in my life ; they always snow when they should rain—and, if they promise sunshine, they make such thundering mistakes, that all the beer in the cellar gets sour'd by 'em.

Kal. There are times and seasons for all things ; I come to speak of your daughter.

Flail. She shall marry whom I please ; and what says your almanack to that, Old Weather-wise ?

Kal. Why it says that girls should be transplanted from the garden of good education——

Flail. I gave ninety pounds a year.

Kal. To be grafted on some healthy stock——

Flail. Well, and don't I say——

Kal. While those, who from the hot beds of false refinement——

Flail. Whew ! come down from your cabbage stalks, and don't compare my family to sprouts and parsley beds ; be she girl, or be she garden-stuff, she marries the son of Old Sordid.

Kal. Which is wedding Virgo to Capricorn.

Flail. Now he's got out of the ground into the skies—didn't you say just now, there were seasons for ev'ry thing.

Kal. Truly!—in childhood, to get wisdom and whipping—in youth, sow wild oats—in manhood, marry, and meet with other misfortunes—in old age.—

Flail. We're too wise to miss the tide, by looking at the moon:

Kal. That's a hit at my old trade;—never mind—I come of a family who—

Flail. Now for their whole chronology; I knew but two of your forefathers, and they—

Kal. Resided here before I was born, which happen'd on New Year's day, one thousand, seven hundred and fifty-five, sixteen minutes, and a half past three in the morning, as per grandmother's gold watch, then lying on a claw table in a corner of the room.

Flail. Psha! I've heard that the first of your family came into this country—

Kal. Anno twelve hundred and fifty-two, at the very time when Roger Bacon invented the magic lantern.

Flail. Aye, they carried it about, I suppose, and taught their children the art of magnifying.

Kal. Sir, my ancestors were never obliged to the family of the Flails, even for a thrashing.

Flail. And as for yourself.

Kal. I was sent to school in the year sixty-three—made prodigious progress in ev'ry thing they didn't wish me to learn—was 'prenticed to a spectacle grinder, in sixty-nine, where I learn'd to make almackes, and predicted every thing but my own good luck, till a distant relation came from abroad, with more money than health, who was so overjoy'd at my foreboding him a long life, that he died directly, and left me ev'ry shilling.

Flail. And now you give advice *gratis*.

Kal. I do, and wou'd have you give your daughter where you promised her—you've had your fortunate planet as well as me, and shou'd remember that liberality is a sun-beam which ought never to be eclipsed by avarice.

D

4
Mary
Edward

Flail. Sir, I scorn to reflect on any body, but—

Kal. I know you do—and while you refuse to share with others, the light which is only reflected on yourself, your lucky star will dwindle to a rush-light, and, when the extinguisher of Old Time puts you out, you'll evaporate in smoke, old Firebrand.

Flail. Put me out, Sir! I'll put you—

Kal. Into any thing but a passion; look, yonder's your daughter, all agitation, like a pond before rain;—bless me! (*looking at his watch*) Venus and Jupiter are on the point of a conjunction; I'll just take an observation through the next room window, and be back in a twinkling.

Flail. Take care, lest in making your observations, you make some of your usual errors.

Kal. I understand you; you're always twitting me with experimental mistakes—such as flying electrical kites in a thunder-storm—and giving such a red hot focus to the schoolmaster's spectacles, that they set his wig on fire—and what then? It's natural to make mistakes in any art, and when the intention is not erroneous, he's a plaguy ill-natured fellow who won't make allowance for 'em. [*Exit.*]

Flail. Let a parent act as honestly as he may, folks will blame him; I dare not wed my daughter to a spendthrift, nor will I force her to marry where she has no liking; and, if Sordid's son should not prove to be the man I take him for—perhaps—but I won't be talk'd out of my reason, for people never know the value of indulgence half so well, as when it comes from authority that knows how to make itself respected.

Enter MARY and EDWARD.

Mary. (*running to her father*) Ah! my dear father such an escape! I owe my life, nay more, perhaps, to the gallantry of Edward.

Flail. Gallantry! hark'ye, Sir, if you have ser-

ved my daughter, I thank you, and so we part friends. (*Leads Mary to the other side.*)

Mary. He sav'd me from a ruffian, who—

Flail. How came you from home?

Mary. I was to blame to go without your knowledge—but—I—I meant no harm.

Flail. Perhaps not; but more mischief comes of meaning no harm than you're aware of; go—and when I have thanked this young gentleman for his gallantry as you call it, I shall have a word or two for your ear; go, I say.

Mary. Sir, you shall command my duty and obedience; but, there is a sentiment of gratitude, which that young man will ever have a right to.

[Exit MARY.]

Edw. And one kind sentiment from Mary will compensate the cruelty of all the world.

Flail. And my cruelty among the rest; I suppose you look on me as a flinty-hearted father—my daughter as fair game—and yourself as the only poacher who has a right to steal her from me.

Edw. You are mistaken, Sir, I wou'd neither sully her honour nor my own, by any action that wou'dn't bear the light. As the girl of my heart, I adore her—as her father, I reverence you—but for myself, I shou'd be a hypocrite were I to say otherwise than that, when I have just risk'd my life in her defence, I think I am, at least, entitled to good manners for my pains. (*going.*)

Flail. Good manners, Sir! I'm not to be taught good manners by any one, much less by a — aye, Sir, you may look big, but—

Edw. Good day, Sir; use your daughter kindly; marry her to whom you please, but make her happy and I'll forgive you all.

Flail. I won't be forgiven—I never deserved to be forgiven—I'll prove it in your case. I had a daughter, and you had a fortune; I have my daughter still, have taken care of her improved her, and

made her worth her weight in gold, a good for nothing huffey! while you—

Edw. Have acted with imprudence, lost my fortune, and have been alternately, the dupe of others, and the enemy of myself.

Flail. Then how dare you talk of forgiving me. When you speak reason, and know how to hold your tongue, I'll listen to you; nay more—as Old Sordid and his son haven't yet made their appearance according to appointment, I'll tell you this, my daughter than't marry till—

Edw. Dear Sir!—

Flail. Till to-morrow morning; and if, by that time you can prove to me that you possess a freehold tenement, one article of live stock, or a single acre of land within six miles of this house, you shall be the man yourself.

Edw. You know, sir, it is impossible; you know I have neither house, land, nor means:

Flail. And are yet so mad as to expect I will match you with my daughter; firrah! firrah! before young folks accuse fathers and grandfathers of cruelty, and hold 'em up to ridicule in stage plays and romances, they shou'd look at home, and think on the greater cruelty of exposing an honest man's child to suffering and poverty for the sake of their own selfish gratification.

[*Exit.*

Edw. His arguments are not to be opposed, and I shou'd be a scoundrel were I to proceed.—What's to be done?—resign her to a rival?—no!—A house and land before to-morrow!—Oh! had I time, I'd overcome all obstacles, and ravish from Fortune by industry and perseverance, the minor gifts of wealth, as mere steps to the prize I aim at—but now 'tis impossible.

Re-enter KALENDAR.

Kal. What's impossible to a lover?—If he had order'd you on an errand to Abyssinia, or bid you

fetch a glass of spring-water from the source of the Nile, you'd have hir'd horses, and been off directly; but when he only asks what's done every day, —

Edw. Sir!

Kal. Why, I've heard all; and, from friendship for your poor old father, should like to serve you, and chouse old Sordid.—Bless my soul! has nobody got a little free-hold to dispose of?

Edw. I thought you saw no difficulty?

Kal. None but what I can—You're sure you can't buy one?

Edw. Shou'd people without money buy estates?

Kal. People without money have most occasion for 'em.—Stay, I think I have it:—Old Flail has affronted me—spoken disrespectfully of my forefathers—abused my almanack—sighted my advice, and ridiculed my predictions; but I'll be even with him. You shall take him at his word, force him to give you his daughter's hand, and obtain his consent against his inclination.

Edw. This is a paradox!

Kal. I deal in paradoxes.—Come home with me, and I'll make it as clear to you as the sun in his meridian.

Edw. Remember, he has a bosom of flint!

Kal. Then do you have a heart of steel, and my brain shall be the tinderbox, to light a match he little dreams of.—Come, it wou'd be hard indeed, if I, who have made a model of the moon, added stars to the orrery, and furnished fine weather to the whole county, couldn't predict the end of an affair like this. I had a sweetheart myself once, and for her sake wou'd have conquer'd ten times your difficulties. Oh, those were happy times, when I dreaded no storms but in Love's Almanack, when I set down frowns for foul weather, smiles for sunshine, and ev'ry billetdoux for a red-letter-day.

[*Exeunt.*]

6

Spring
Summer

2

20
[W]

FIVE MILES OFF; OR,

SCENE—KALENDAR'S *Study and Library.*

An Orrery, Telescopes, Electrical Apparatus, Chair, &c.

SPRIGGINS and JENNY discovered.

Jen. Lord, now, Mr. Spriggins, if any of the folks at our house knew I was here, at your master's, Mr. Kalendar's, what wou'd they say to it?

Sprig. Why, they'd say as you com'd a courting to me, or else as you wanted to have your fortune told by him.

Jen. I'm sure I only came to ask advice about poor young mistresses—she'll be lock'd up, and fed upon bread and water, if she don't marry the strange young man that's expected.

Sprig. Well; and how's my master to help that?

Jen. Why, can't he cast some of their nativities, and look through a *fig-nifying-glass*, and tell about stars and fiery dragons.

Sprig. A *signifying-glass*! — a horoscope, you mean.—Lord help you!—Why, you be as ignorant as you be pretty.

Jen. Yes; I'm *very* ignorant.—Are these all his books?

Sprig. Yes; he do know what's o'clock all over the world; *ge-ho-graphy* be his hobby horse; and, when he's once up, he rides like a witch on a broom-staff!

Jen. Mercy on us! and what's that? (*pointing to the orrery.*)

Sprig. That's a horrary---that's Jupiter and his *set o'lights*---and Satan and Lucifer, and the rest of the heavenly bodies.

Jen. I thought Venus was a heavenly body.

Sprig. Yes; and this shews all her motions; and this is a comet; and these suns be all moons.

Jen. (*going to the electrical machine.*) And what's this?---be this music?

Sprig. No; don't touch that; if you turn that handle round, you'll do mischief---it be put there to

be ready against Mr. Roundabout, the gouty tax-gatherer, comes to *collect*trified.

Jen. Never mind---is the old gentleman coming up?

Sprig. No; but if you meddle with that infernal machine, you may bring the old gentleman up in good earnest.

Jen. Mercy on us; and so these are your master's tools to tell fortunes with.

Sprig. No; this is the way to tell fortunes---give me your hand.

Jen. La! Mr. Spriggins!

Sprig. Let me see---aye, you'll be married to a tall---thin young man, about my age.

Jen. Indeed!

Sprig. Yes, you will marry a bachelor; and your first husband will live to have two wives.

Jen. What---at one time!

Sprig. Oh, no.

Jen. No!—Why, then, I don't think you understand fortune-telling at all.—I have been told better; and I wou'd not die and leave the best husband in England, if I cou'd help it.

Sprig. Then you shall marry me. I've forty pounds a-year, besides wages; and, if master wou'd put us into a new public-house, by gemini, we'd set up the seven signs of the zodi-wac.

Jen. There's too many signs in the village already; the half-moon's never full, and there's nobody in the sun from morning till night.

Sprig. Well; and, if so be as—(*Jenny lets fall a barometer, which breaks.*) there, you've broken one of the best weather-glasses—there'll be a fine storm when master comes home—he'll be all over in a constellation.

Jen. 'Twas all along o'you: what did you talk such nonsense to me for—about seven signs at one public-house.

Kalinde
Edwara

KALENDAR (*without.*)

Kal. What the devil are you all at there?

Jen. O dear! O dear! what shall I do?—I dare not face him—I shall be kill'd!

Sprig. Run in here; and I'll take the fault all on myself. (*puts her into a closet.*)

KALENDAR enters, followed by EDWARD.

Kal. Here's a chaos!—hey day!—who has done this?

Sprig. Not Jenny, fir—it were I, fir.—I were looking for the great bear, fir; and, when I saw you coming, I were so frightful o' your being angry, that I knock'd un over, fir.

Kal. Out of my sight, you plague of Egypt!

Sprig. Dear, dear, how will Jane get out of the closet! (*aside, and Exit.*)

Kal. Every thing in confusion---not a planet in its orbit---the globe upset---the glass fallen---and I shall be ruined.---There, I must put my stars out of their reach. (*stands in a chair, and puts the orrery on a high shelf.*) I think nobody will get at that again.

Edw. Unless they stand in that high chair as you did.

Kal. I'll put that in its place too. (*puts the chair in a recess, behind a curtain, and fixes a chain to it, from the electrical machine.*) There, that chair is charged with electric fluid; and, if any one touches that, a single turn of this handle will tickle their tobies.---John Spriggins!

Enter SPRIGGINS.

Sprig. I be here, fir.

Kal. Run to O'Gimlet, the carpenter, and bid him make haste where I told him, and do you go and help him.

Sprig. Yes, fir.

Kal. And John!---

Sprig. (*re-entering.*) Yes, fir.

Kal. Take Flourish, the painter, in your hand, and bid 'em both make haste.

Sprig. Yes, fir.---Dear, dear, how will Jane get out of the closet. *[Exit.]*

Kal. And Spriggins!-----

Re-enter SPRIGGINS.

You don't know of any body that has a little freehold to part with?

Sprig. Vreehold! no, fir! I have forty pounds a year, besides wages; but ---

Kal. Don't stand chattering there. *[Exit SPRIGGINS.]* Now, a'n't you all impatience to know what I'm about? *(to EDWARD.)*

Edw. Rather anxious, I confess.

Kal. You observed, that, in our transit hither, I touch'd at the carpenter's, bricklayer's, and painter's.

Edw. I don't see how that relates to me.

Kal. No!—Did you never hear of my book upon forest charters, and rights of common? *(reaches a folio.)*

Edw. No, fir; and, at a time like this, I had rather be excused attacking so large a volume.

Kal. Large! Heaven forbid a British public should ever countenance any *abridgment* of their *common rights*! No, no; here's the passage shall explain this mystery.

Edw. It isn't long, I hope, fir?

Kal. Silence! *(reads.)* "By virtue of one of our forest charters, if a man do build a dwelling upon common land, from sun-set to sun-rise, and enclose a piece of ground, wherein there shall be a tree growing, a beast feeding, a fire kindled, a chimney smoking, and provision in the pot, such dwelling shall be freely held by the builder, any thing herein to the contrary, nevertheless notwithstanding."

Edw. But how—

Kal. Don't interrupt me: I've bargain'd for the

wooden billiard-room at the Crown. We'll carry it to the forest, build a chimney at one end of it, plant a tree from my garden, and to-morrow shall make a freeholder of you.

Edw. Sir, your zeal for my service makes you forget, that, when the *means* are unworthy of the *end*, —

Kal. That we ought to stop in the middle?—Psha! —there are spots in the sun; and when we can't snow white, we must snow brown.—Look at that team: (*takes him to a window.*) there go three parts of your mansion, upon four wheels.—Your star is in its altitude. I've hired Charles's wain to carry your *house* and *set fortuna domus*.

Edw. Yet, ere we go further, —

Kal. We must buy a cow and a kitchen range.

Edw. But, when Mr. Flail comes to know —

Kal. That you've got a good fire and a piece of beef, he'll give you something to make the pot boil.

Edw. Your plan is romantic.---

Kal. If it was not, I'd have nothing to do with it: the *times* are romantic, and I always accord with the *seasons*, from one year's end to another.

Edw. Always?

Kal. Yes: I bring in the new year, and eat twelfth-cake in *January*; write valentines in *February*--*March*, in procession with St. David, and dine with the sons of St. Patrick; make fools in *April*; dance with the chimney-sweepers in *May*; drink the king's health in *June*; and take the *longest day* to pay my bills in. Jump into the ocean in *July*; cut my corn in *August*; go *hopping* and *popping* in *September*; brew in *October*; chair Guy Faux and my lord-mayor in *November*; while, in *December*, roast beef, plumb pudding, old port, blindman's buff, romps, riddles, and kissing the pretty girls under the mistletoe, wind up our Christmas gambols, and set us all agog to begin the year again.

[*Exeunt.*]

End of the Second Act.

2 Chairs ACT III

SCENE---An Apartment at 'Squire Flail's.

Enter ROBERT and LUCKLESS.

ROBERT.

WHO, Sir shall I say wants Master?

Luck. Mr. Laurence Luckless from London.*Rob.* Yes, Sir; Mr. Lucky Laurence, from---
from where did you say, Sir?*Luck.* (gives him a newspaper.) Here, that will do instead of a card; say it's the gentleman described in that paper.*Rob.* Gentleman! I must tell him that, or he won't find it out, I fear. (aside.) [Exit.*Luck.* With my usual good fortune; I lost my friend Edward as soon as I found him; forgot what he told me about that confounded finger-post, and have come some miles out of my way; I believe what one finds on the highway is one's own, and I'm not a little obliged to the owner of this coat for leaving it where he did; it hides my shabby habiliments, and gives me so much the air of a horse-dealer, that I look quite like a man of fashion in it.*Enter FLAIL (with a newspaper.)**Flail.* Servant, Sir; a well looking lad---(aside.) glad to see you, and as you are brought here by this promise, (pointing to the newspaper) I dare say you're not sorry to see me.*Luck.* Nor yet a little impatient to hear you, Sir, on the subject of that promise.*Flail.* I'll satisfy you directly; sit down and tell your history.*Luck.* Nay, sir; it is I who came to listen.*Flail.* Indeed! and how am I to know whether you are the person here meant?*Luck.* Sir, I am the son of a mother who died1
Robert
Luckless
Flail
(newspaper)

soon after I was born—of a father who never own'd me—and have been left to a guardian, who, between friends, is one of the greatest——

Flail. Hush! you don't know who you are abusing.

Luck. I was so pointed at by village boys as the child of nobody, that I quitted the place of my birth, was overtaken by my guardian, whom I have never seen since, and sent to a cheap school at a great distance.

Flail. So far, so good :

Luck. Perhaps not ; the schoolmaster was extravagantly fond of boxing and rural sports, and paid me so much attention that I was quickly grounded in the elements of Walton's Angler—cou'd knock down any boy in the first form—and never underwent even the correction of a fishing rod.

Filal. Nay, if you run away from your story—

Luck. It will be exactly what I did from the school ; where, as soon as I cou'd beat the master at his own lessons, he beat me in return ; I fled to the college, where Mr. Edward Frankland, a former playfellow, was at his studies ; and my guardian forgave me, because the schoolmaster dare not demand his money, and because I got the rest of my education for nothing.

Flail. With Edward Frankland?

Luck. As an humble companion, we exchanged our mutual accomplishments ; and, though I may not be as good a classic as he wish'd to make me, yet it is my pride to say, that I taught him to tickle a trout in a stream, or put in a *Belcher* at a boxing match, with any man in England.

Flail. You next went 'prentice?

Luck. To one who detested latin, and hated boxing, so I ran away again from the prejudice of education, and have been left to my own resources, 'till your public invitation procured me the honour of this private audience.

Flail. Your story proves you the right person--- now, hear mine.

Luck. I am quite satisfied of your identity, and had rather be told what relates to myself.

Flail. Listen, Sir; a careful middle-aged man, who had been uncommonly severe on the faults of others, committed one himself.

Luck. That I haven't the least doubt of.

Flail. The partner of his folly died, and left a son; the father fearing to offend a patron on whom he then depended, pass'd for the guardian of this boy, whom he brought up to baffle with the world, the patron is dead—the father is rich—and you—you are his son and heir.

Luck. His son?—son to old Sordid!

Flail. You're not ashamed of a rich father?

Luck. Ashamed! no, but you're not joking, are you?

Flail. Joking!

Luck. I have heard him so spoken of, that—that as he is my father I must forget it. I have not been used to the name of father—but I know my duty—and—I shall never be able to thrash half the people, that I've heard abuse him.

Flail. Well, but he has offer'd you as my son-in-law.

Luck. I heard that before I knew who I was.

Flail. And, as you have given a true account of yourself, perhaps I don't like you the worse for it.

Luck. But, as to being your son-in-law, sir, I have a friend who must be consulted.

Flail. Aye; you mean Edward, I suppose.

Luck. He would furnish a reason against it: but I have another---my wife might possibly have some objection.

Flail. Married!

Luck. Yes; I can't say she's much of a wife, being hardly higher than your cane, but her's is an engagement I never intend to run away from.

2.

Young

Mr. Pratt

K. C. Jones

Sordid

Flail. And where is she?

Luck. Ten miles off only---at a little inn, where she waits the intelligence my visit seem'd to promise.

Flail. And what do you mean to do?

Luck. Why, the best thing I can do will be to---What do you think?

Flail. Umph!--my advice will be soon given.

---Robert---(*Enter ROBERT.*)---Saddle my daughter's horse and mine.---(*Exit ROBERT.*)---You shall fetch your wife, and meet your father.---You'll eat and drink first?

Luck. I have little appetite.

Flail. Why?

Luck. Because I have fasted nearly the whole day; and a pleasant change is so new to me, that tho' I have always kept my spirits when in trouble, they seem to think now I have no further occasion for 'em.

Flail. Oh! well; a good glass of wine will bring you up again.

Luck. Perhaps it may.---I thought good luck was coming when I found this coat, and now I have found this father of mine.

Flail. Speak of him with respect.---No son shall forget his duty in my presence.

Luck. Aye, sir, but when a parent has taken so little pains to make other folks speak well of him,---

Flail. He has the more need to be defended by his children.

[*Exeunt.*]

W

SCENE—KALENDAR'S Study, as before.

JENNY, (*peeping from the Closet.*)

Jen. It's mortal cruel of John Spriggins to let me stay here so long.—Nobody seems to be in the way; so, I'll go, without even saying good bye to him.—I'll be hang'd, if here isn't Mrs. Prudence, old master's cousin.—If she catches me here, it will be as much as my place is worth.—I'll be bound she comes to find me out.—What a mean thing it is for people

Crash ready

to be so curious.—I'll hide again, and try if I can't overhear what she wants. (*returns into the closet.*)

Enter MRS. PRUE.

Mrs. Pru. Why, the house is quite deserted.—I'm sure I traced that hussy Jane to the door; and, whether she comes to see John Spriggins, or to consult Mr. Kalendar, I'm determin'd to discover.—I hope it's John; for, if she dare have any design on his master—it's a shame for young women to be trying to decoy men who,—bless me, here's Mr. K. and I don't think I ever look'd so shockingly in all my life. (*runs to a glass, and adjusts herself.*)

Enter KALENDAR.

Kal. The work goes bravely forward—bricklayer, carpenter, painter, glazier, and gardener, all busy; and I'll bet Herschell's telescope to an opera-glass that our plan will be accomplish'd within time.—Ah, *Mrs. Prue*, this is an honour.

Mrs. Pru. (*smiling.*) Do you really think so sir?

Kal. Any particular commands---came home in a hurry to electrify the gouty tax-gatherer, and must be off again directly.

Mrs. Pru. I shan't detain you, sir.---I neither want my fortune told, nor my nativity cast.

Kal. Cou'dn't do that if you did.---Ladies never tell their age, you know.

Mrs. Pru. You have been taken in then? (*Jenny peeps out, Mrs. P. sees her.*)

Kal. Oh, yes; the dear deceivers have play'd me a thousand tricks.

Mrs. Pru. (*eying the closet.*) Indeed! I thought as much.

Kal. Yes: there was your neighbour, *Mrs. Wizenface*, came here t'other day.

Mrs. Pru. (*still watching the closet.*) An impudent hussy!

Kal. No, not impudent, but as fine as a rainbow,

and as crooked; into the bargain:---She gave me a wrong age, and I prophesied all the good things that have since happened to her grand-daughter.

Mrs. Pru. It's a great shame.

Kal. But what can I do?---I don't know how to dispose of half the females who come to me.

Mrs. Pru. No!--have you no convenient room, Mr. K. you cou'd contrive to put a lady into?

Kal. Oh, Mrs. Prudence; fie for shame! why, you wou'dn't think of such a thing, wou'd you?

Mrs. Pru. (*bridling.*) Me! no, fir; but there are some whom you might lock up, with their own consent too.

Kal. I keep no key for any such purpose: my closets are all full of curiosities of every age; and I wou'dn't put a woman among 'em for the world.

Mrs. Pru. (*significantly.*) Is there no curiosity in *that* closet?

Kal. A great many:---it contains all the rarities of the seventeenth century! from the time cauliflowers were first planted in England, trunk-hose gave way to modern inexpressibles, judges began to wear wigs, and Peter the Great went 'prentice to a ship-carpenter.

Mrs. Pru. And, pray, when were invisible girls invented?

Kal. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, you cou'd only see a lady from fore-head to the chin; but now, nothing's invisible but the petticoats.

Mrs. Pru. Well, fir, you may talk as you please; but I say ---

Enter a Boy.

Boy. Sir, master can't get out of his gouty chair; and wants to speak to you at the door.

Kal. That's lucky; I shall the sooner get back to my job in the forest. (*aside*) Excuse me, Mrs. Prue. Go along, Dickey. (*exit Boy.*) I'll follow.

Mrs. Pru. But, fir, I must say one word.

Kal. I'll be back, directly, but can't stop long; in the mean time, perhaps, you may take a peep at the planets; or, if you'd like to see my new conductor, you may step up to the top of the house, and treat yourself with a flash of lightning: and, when I'm less busy, I'll shew you ev'ry natural curiosity in my whole collection. [Exit KALENDAR.]

Mrs. Pru. I'll make bold to see one of 'em now.—No, no, I'll take no peep at the planets—my discoveries shall be of more consequence.—But, stop—the huffey will deny she came to him, though it's plain enough why he wanted me out of the way:—he said he'd return—so, I'll just hide behind this curtain.—When he thinks me absent, miss will be let out;—but I'll spoil their *tete-a-tete*, I warrant. *(goes into the recess, where KALENDAR had put his electrical chair.)*

Re-enter KALENDAR.

Kal. So!—one plague's got rid of;—and now to send off the other.—Eh! gone!—I didn't see her come out; but I suppose she slipped by, when I was talking to the old gentleman.

Jen. *(who has come out during his speech.)* Which way did she go, sir?

Kal. Mercy on us! which way did you come?

Jen. Dear, dear, sir, I be so frightened.—I came, sir, by way of *in-sulting* your knowledge about poor young missus; and, when the old woman catch'd I in the cupboard there, I—dear—dear—I be so frighten'd.—

Kal. In the cupboard!—Oh!—why, then, the old Jezebel meant something.—I cou'dn't think what she was at, ogling me with her northern lights.—Well, sit down, Jenny, I can spare a moment to talk to you.—Sit down, and recover yourself. You're

3
 a good girl; and I should be happy to give you some little proof of my regard.

Laney Mrs. Pru. (from the recess.) Oh! oh! (in a half suppressed voice.)

Jen. What's that!—blefs me, I be so frighten'd.

Kal. Something wrong in my machinery.—Stay, as old Gouty won't be electrified to-day, I may as well let off this machine. It's full charged, and may do mischief else. (goes to the machine.)

Jen. Oh, dear, fir, don't ye go to touch that; for John Spriggins do tell I it will raise the devil.

Kal. We'll soon see that—

Jen. Do let I get out of the way then. (runs to the other side.)

+++
 Kal. There, you foolish girl (turns the handle, Mrs. PRUE screams and jumps out of the recess. JENNY falls on her knees. KALENDAR is astonished.)

cash Jen. I never was so frighten'd in all my life.

Mrs. Pru. I never was so shock'd in all my life.

Kal. I dare say not.—Egad I must have tickled her.

Mrs. Pru. You---tickle me! Sir, I am so angry, so choaked with passion—

Kal. That you seem quite electrified.

Jen. Indeed, dear madam---I--

Mrs. Pru. Out of my sight, you huffey---

Jen. Oh I wish he'd stuff her into one of his great telegraphs. [Exit.

Mrs. Pru. This is the gouty tax-gatherer you came to, fir.

Kal. No, it isn't.

Mrs. Pru. What business had she in that closet?

Kal. To see what you were doing in that corner.

Mrs. Pru. But my cousin shall know, and she shall leave the house directly.

Kal. You're welcome to do the same; and next time you come here to make experiments, take care you don't get another curtain lecture.

Mrs. Pru. Sir, if you had a single spark of good breeding—

Kal. If I had, I'd recommend him to you directly, ---but you've exhausted all my sparks, and I wish you much benefit from the operation.

Mrs. Pru. I'll see the young huffey punish'd, that I will. [Exit.

Kal. And I'll see the old man safe out of the house. Egad, if every time I turn this handle, it produces such a sudden squall as it did just now, it will be unsafe to touch it: What between the old woman in the recess, and the young one in the closet, I was completely galvinised! [Exit.



SCENE—*The entrance of a rustick Inn.*

Enter LAURA LUCKLESS, from the House.

Lau. No, I can see nothing of him.—I wish I had gone with him,—what a misfortune it is to have a husband that's always unlucky.—I dare say this fine promise in the newspapers, was only a trick, and he'll come back so cross! Heigho! what a hurry I was once in to get married, and now we have so many troubles, vexations and quarrels!—O lud! O lud! Marriage without money isn't half so pleasant as the days of courtship.

SONG—LAURA—(adapted to an old Air.)

The hawthorn was blowing, young flow'rets were gay,
Primroses were growing, birds sung on each spray,
But sweeter sung my true love, far sweeter to my ear,
I'm waiting here for you love, 'tis the spring time
of year.

4
Song's 2
Luckless

II.

In summer I yielded, my love's bride to be made,
But as leaves droop in autumn, our joys too will fade,
For love without riches is chill'd by the frost,
And 'ere winter, alas! all my pleasures were lost.

Enter SORDID.

5

Bob

Landlord

Courtesan

Robert

Sord. Bless my heart! Bless my heart! Five miles! Why I do think I've travell'd fifteen, and this is the first house I've met with;—I can't have much farther to go: Oh! there's a female,—young woman!

Lau. Young woman!

Sord. Well then, *Miss.*

Lau. Sir, I'm married.

Sord. Why then, *Madam*, do tell me how far it is to Harvest Hall.

Lau. It's ten miles, sir,—and long ones too, if I may measure by the absence of my husband.

Sord. Ten miles! it was only five, three hours ago.

Lau. Which way did you come, sir?

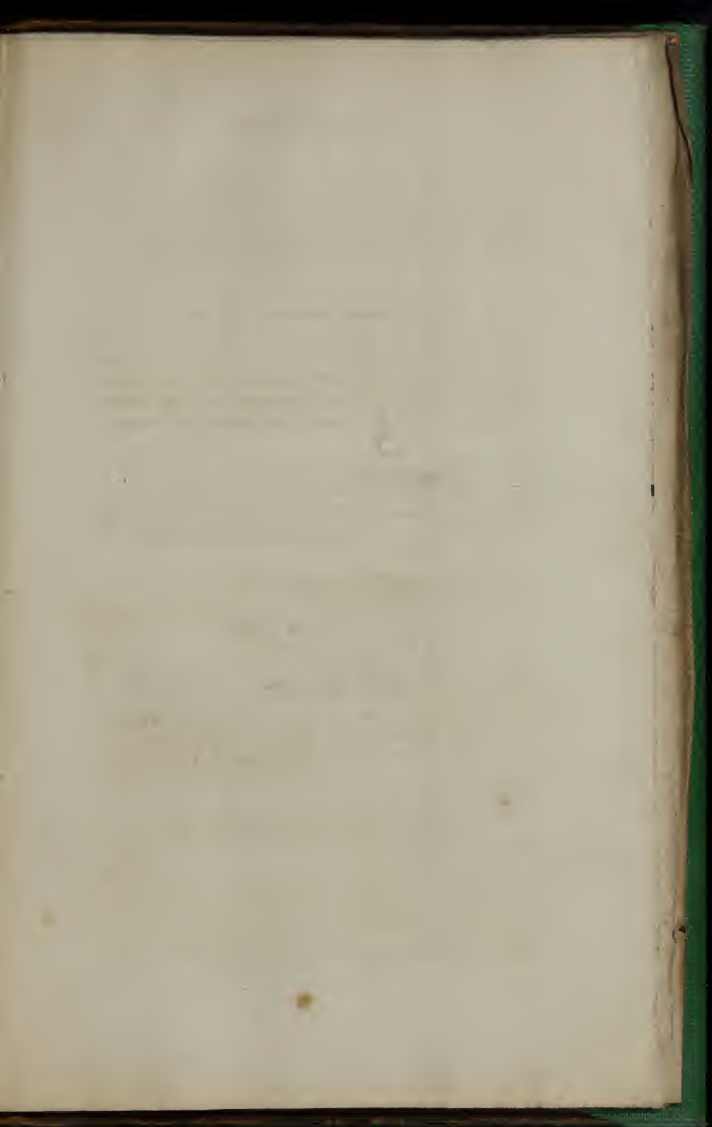
Sord. I came by the post.

Lau. Then perhaps you've been mis-sent, by a wrong direction.

Sord. Mis-sent! So I've walk'd off my legs, broke my appointment with old Flail; risk'd some of my property; lost the rest,—and here comes the very man that robb'd me of it.

Lau. Oh there he is!—My dear, dear fellow—I'll fly to meet him—I'm sure he's been lucky, for he's got a new coat already. *[Exit.]*

Sord. Oh ho! She's a confederate—I'll get assistance from the house, recover my lo's, get forty pounds for apprehending a highwayman, and that hussy's dear fellow shall be hang'd. *[Exit into the house.]*



6

Sprizzen

Flourish

Chim. Lit

Werklager

Werkman

Kalender

Enter LUCKLESS and LAURA.

Luck. to Robert. Give the horses a feed, my lad, and we'll be back to your master's directly. Well! my dear little Laura!

Lau. Well, Laurence—do tell me all.

Luck. Directly, I guess your impatience, and—did they give you any dinner in this devil of a dog-hole?

Lau. If they had, I cou'dn't have eat it for anxiety.—Well, you went to the Hall, and found—

Luck. An old friend, a new coat, and a father!

Lau. A father!

Luck. Aye, and a rich one too, you little rogue---

Lau. A rich one! Well, I don't know how it was, but it always wou'd run in my head, that you must have had a father, though you never found him out.

SORDID enters from the House with Landlord, BLACK BOB, and Countrymen, smoking.

Luck. But I've found him out now, and a curious one he is too. When I ask his blessing, I dare say the first thing he'll say, will be-----

Sord. (coming forward.) Knock him down. That's the fellow that robb'd me.---*(they seize Luckless.)*

Black Bob. (aside.) That's my coat, sure enough---

Luck. Scoundrels! I never saw that man in my life.

Lau. My husband accused of robbery!

Sord. Search him---I'll swear to my money, it's all mark'd.

Black Bob. (comes forward.) Mark'd---why any body may mark money; may be you'll swear to that, -----*(shews a piece of gold.)*

Sord. That---why, I will swear that he,---no,---that---that piece of gold---

Land. That old gentleman's crazy!

Sord. Crazy?---Don't let him go---for I'll swear to the man by the coat---

Luck. The coat! Sir, I pick'd this coat up on the highway.

Sord. I dare say you did.

Luck. And when I found this hanging on a post---

Sord. You little thought of being hang'd yourself, ---bring him along.

Lau. Pray don't---he's innocent.

Black Bob. Mayhap he is---A man is not to be found guilty by outsize appearance. I knows somewhat of law.—What's a coat?—a coat isn't a man.—There, I'll put it on; and what of that?

Sord. Why, then, if it was the last word I had to say, I'd swear that you are the man that did rob me.

Landlord and Countrymen. Oh, shame! shame!

Lau. Shame, indeed!—that wicked old man will swear any thing.

~~*Luck.* Harkye, fir~~

~~*Sord.* Seize him, I charge you~~

Black Bob. Would you like to try the coat, Mifs; perhaps, he'll say 'twas you.

Sord. He robb'd me close by a finger-post, in the forest where four roads meet.

Countryman. Then the finger-post must have grown there since morning.—That old fellow tells nothing but flams.

Luck. To be call'd a thief!—I insist on carrying him to Mr. Flail's.

Sord. The place I'm going to—only mind you *do* carry me—for I'll not walk another step—and, as we go, I'll shew you the very spot where I was robb'd—and take my money out of the bank, by the roadside. (*apart.*)

Luck. Are the horses ready?

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. All ready, fir.

Black Bob. Well, then, as nobody seems to own this coat, perhaps, I have as much right to it as another.

Sord. Stop, fir.—No running away. (*seizes him.*)

Luck. Aye! I insist on our all going, and having this all clear'd up.

Sord. I'm in custody---mind that---and I'll bring a swinging action for false imprisonment.

Luck. Come, then, we shall have justice at the hall; and then I shall have an action against you for charging Laurence Luckless with felony.

Sord. Who—What, are you—

Luck. Don't talk to me, fir—you've said too much already.

Sord. But, my dear boy—my—

Luck. Put him on the 'squire's horse.—Come,
Laura. [*Exeunt LUCKLESS and LAURA.*]

Sord. Gentlemen!—only hear me—call him back; for I do believe that unnatural bird, that ungracious varlet, is neither more nor less than my own son!

Countryman. Oh, dear, Oh, dear—he be quite mad—bring him along. [*Exeunt.*]

W

SCENE—The cross Roads and Finger Post, with the addition of a neat wooden House, with a Brick Chimney, a Lamb grazing within the Pales that surround it.

When the Scene is discovered, a great knocking is heard, as if within the House—a Bricklayer is fixing the Chimney-Pot—SPRIGGINS, on a Ladder, is nailing a Cherry-Tree against one side of the Building—FLOURISH is painting the Pales—O'GIMLET is hanging a little Gate to them—and KALENDAR is looking out of a Window.

7

Edward

Hail

Sordid

Countryman

Luckless

Lanza

Kal. Well done, boys ; work away outside, while we finish within, and I'll be with you directly. (*retires from the window.*)

O'Gim. I say, Mr. Flourish.

Flou. Well, friend.

O'Gim. Don't be twiddling there about nothing ; but bring one of your fists here with a pound brush in it.

Flou. I will not come at thy bidding ; nor will I cease twiddling until I see occasion.

O'Gim. O, mighty well !—the thing's all done to your hands ; and, if you won't finish it, it's no fault of mine.

Sprig. (*coming down.*) Never saw a better bit of gardener's work since I was born.

Flou. Yea ; the dwelling is most neatly colour'd.

O'Gim. It's the prettiest timber'd edifice within five miles, let who will be next door to it.

Sprig. Oh, talk of beauty, my tree against your house, for what you like.

Flou. Thy tree has spoil'd my paint, which will also spoil thy planting.

Enter KALENDAR from House, (Smoke rises from the Chimney)

Kal. There ! all ready, inside and out ; old Margery's blowing the fire ; Edward's gone to ask for his wife ; and there only wants a sun-dial on the door-post, a weather-glass against the wainscoat, and an almanack behind the door to complete the furniture.

Enter Bricklayer. from House

Brick. Neat bit of brick work, that there chimbley, —my master—devilish well—it smokes,—It's a pity the walls an't brick too.

Kal. No pity at all:—an English freeholder's house is his castle, and wooden walls are a devilish good protection—eh!—why, that post points wrong.

O'Gim. That's impossible, when it points to every road in the place—it's painted wrong, honey.

Flou. The fault is in the top, which moveth:

O'Gim. Not at all; I knock'd a great nail in it awhile ago, to keep it where it is.

Kal. Well, away with you; drink long life to the new landlord, for here he comes, huzza! *(They shout as EDWARD enters with FLAIL—the Quaker shouts in a formal manner—the workmen go off.)*

Flail. Hey-day! whose dwelling's this, I wonder? Is this what you mean to say is your's?

Kal. All his:—house, goods, chattels, and live stock—cattle grazing—tree growing, and chimney smoking—

Sprig. And if your worship pleases to come in, you shall see me lay t' cloth. *[Exit into the house.]*

Edw. You see, Sir, I have not deceived you—our common friend has enabled me to claim your promise.

Flail. And do you mean to claim it on such grounds?

Kal. Such grounds wou'd make a beautiful figure in an auctioneer's catalogue; four prospects at one view—spacious enclosure—one head of live lamb, and a garden full of wall fruit; and do you think he means to have all this trouble and expence for nothing?

Edw. At least, Sir, I hope you will not give Mary to my rival?

Flail. Why, no; I won't for two reasons; in the first place, he's married already; in the next, if you give proof of continuing so industrious, I——

Kal. Why, who the deuce have we here, I wonder?

Enter SORDID and COUNTRYMAN—he runs to FLAIL, and stares about him while he shakes hands.

Sor. My dear old friend—you'll hear me speak, I'm sure—I've been so used, that—why this can't be the place where I hid my money (*aside*.)

Flail. I don't wonder at your gazing about—I can hardly believe my own eyes.

Kal. (*to Edward*) There's Mary, run and meet her.
[*Exit EDWARD.*]

Enter LUCKLESS and LAURA.

Luck. (*to Flail*) Ah, Sir! we've met half-way;—here is the lady of whom I told you—and there is a crazy old man who accuses me of robbing him,—*pointing to SORDID, who is searching and peeping about for his money.*

Flail. Shall I never teach youth to be respectful; that crazy old man is your father.

Luck. Found at last, and in this place too?

Sor. Found! is it found? Where is it? give it me directly.

Flail. Why that's your son, and that's his wife.

Kal. And that seems to be the long and the short of it.

Sor. I said it was my son—but married! do come this way? (*Flail, Sordid, Luckless, and Laura go up the stage.*)

Enter SPRIGGINS, with a dirty bundle from the house.

Sprig. (to Kalendar) Here be a dirty bundle in a black handkerchief, kicking about among the rubbish—it do chink as th’of ’twere money.

Sor. Give it me—it’s mine—it’s—

Kal. (snatching it) No, it’s not your’s; whatever is found in that house, belongs to its owner. Here, Edward. (*EDWARD re-enters with MARY.*) You’re lord of the manor; perhaps this is a prize for you. (*Gives him the bundle—Mary goes to her father—Jenny enters and runs to Spriggins, who in dumb shew, points out the new house, &c.*)

Sor. A prize indeed! ’tis mine—’tis money, mortgages, and, above all, there are the writings and titles of his father’s estate.

Kal. And where have the title deeds of a deceased father, a better right to be than in the hands of his son? They were found under his roof.

Sor. They were under no roof—when I buried them. (*aside.*)

Luck. Father seems to have brought a pretty house over his head.

Edw. Take your money, Sir; these papers must be examined elsewhere.

Flail. So, so; he’ll get his estate back. (*aside.*) Why, Mary, what do you hang on me for? I know you’d rather take his arm by half; go.

Mary. I obey you Sir, with pleasure.

Flail. To be sure—see how I bring up my children.

Kal. Ah! You always said she was a good girl.

Sprig. (to Jenny.) And what be you hanging upon I for?

Jenny. I hanging on you; why I’ll be whipt if he hasn’t been a sweet-hearting o’ me as hard as ever he could ever since I came into the place.

Kal. Come, let's into our new dwelling, and try to compromise.

Sor. But what's to be done with the man who robb'd me?

Flail. Done with him! take him to the village, and lock him up: I'll make him leave off his roguish habits.

Luck. And when he does leave off his habits, don't let it be where I may pick 'em up again.

Edw. Among these papers is one of no pecuniary worth, but to me a prize above them all.

Sor. You may keep that—it's of no use but to the owner. (*aside.*)

Edw. It contains the blessing and forgiveness of my father; and cou'd you have withheld——

Kal. No; I hope nobody here would wish to withhold forgiveness, and tho' our edifice be formed of slight materials, yet, as it is only intended for a summer house, we entreat our Lords and Ladies of the Manor to allow it Right of Common.

THE END.

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

CHARACTERS.

Kalendar Mr. FAWCETT.
Flourish Mr. LISTON.
Spriggins Mr. MATHEWS.
Jenny Mrs. GIBBS.

Enter KALENDAR (reading an almanack.)

Kal. Almanack says, this day—aye thus it goes;
“Sev’nth of July—Thomas a’Becket—Toes.”
“The weather overcast.”—That sounds but queer;
I hope to find no *cloudy* faces here!
What next?—Oh! to *this market*, no dismay;—
“Fine weather now for getting up the Hay.”
Box-keeper, *here*, makes hay, when in he crams
Arms, shoulders, ancles, hips, knees, legs, and hams
But when he stuffs you in, all snug and warm,
O! Vox Stellarum!—who can then inform
Whether ’twill turn to *sun-shine* or a *storm*?
Of this night’s cause who shall be undertaker?
Our poet trembles—

Enter FLOURISH.

Flou. ———— He hath sent a quaker.

Kal. What is it you predict about our play
Think you ’twill prosper?

Flou. ———— Peradventure, yea.

EPILOGUE.

Kal. Sometimes they clap, and that betokens bliss.

Flou. Sometimes the spirit moveth, and they hiss.

Kal. Have you no friends above there?—(*Point-
ing to the gallery.*)

Flou. ————— Thou dost scoff.

Kal. Why so?

Flou. Thou know'st they call out there, "*Hats off.*"

Enter SPRIGGINS and JENNY.

Kal. Spriggins! my man! you're here, I'll hold a
To serve the Play — [guinea,

Sprig. ————— I've been, and married Jenny.

Jenny. Beneath which sign, Sir, is my husband born?

Kal. Like many husbands—under *Capricorn.*

Sprig. Under what sign, then, do the sky make *her*

Kal. The *Crab.* [go?

Sprig. ————— There, Jane; I know'd it wasn't *Wings.*
I said so. ———

Jenny. Hold your prate, then, foolish—do;—
Your Measter's wife, and know'd it afore you.

Kal. Now for the bard:—Athwart his telescope,
May no malignant planet damp his hope!

May no eclipses make his prospect black!

Sprig. Nor no bad sign in all his *Zody-nack.*

Kal. With mirth, may eyes, like stars be twinkling
Friend Flourish, don't you join in this? [merrily!

Flou. ————— Yea verily.

Sprig. I wish him right good luck, now, by my figgins!

Jenny. And happy as a bride, like Jenny Spriggins.

Kal. Come then—(*to the Audience*)—You, *Libra*, or
the *Balance*, hold;

Applaud him, and he'll feel like *Leo* bold;

If you condemn—for Fortune is precarious—

His eyes must then be govern'd by *Aquarius.*

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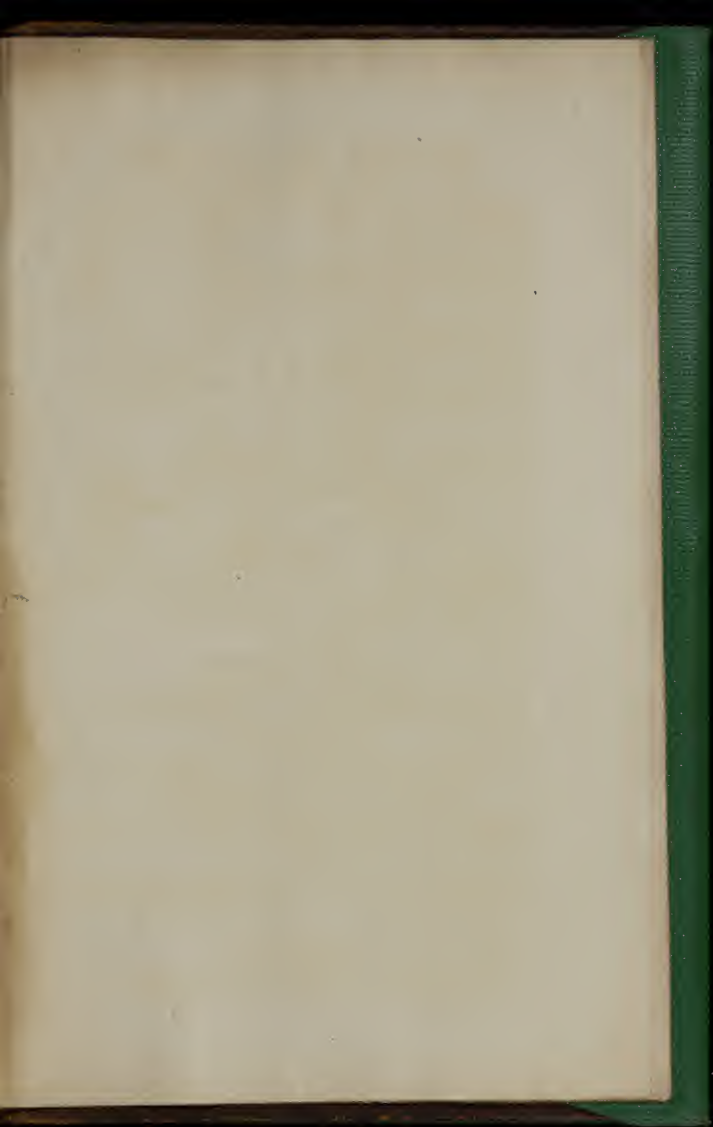
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